



Notes from the Director

No. 57

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SENIOR OFFICER DEVELOPMENT COURSE

On 20 October, the new Senior Officer Development Course will begin. Its purpose, its content, the criteria for student selection and its relevance to the career prospects of professional GS-14's and 15's make it unlike any educational program the Agency has ever offered.

During four months, one each spent on the intelligence product, collection, analysis and management, this course will provide participants with a unique opportunity to step back from their operational responsibilities and make an investment in their future. The experience will be a demanding one, but because it will broaden and deepen participants' understanding of the whole Agency, it will enhance significantly their potential for early advancement and Agency-wide responsibilities. Every middle-level professional who expects to advance to the senior ranks in the Agency should look forward to taking this course.

The course will be taught primarily through extensive outside reading, oral and written analysis of case studies and directed seminars and tutorials. Subject matter will range from a careful examination of the intelligence product and whether it really meets consumers' needs, to the issues and conflicts inherent in good collection and analysis, to the problems of effective management from the office through community levels. Rather than attempting to cover everything of relevance to a prospective supergrade—which would result in a superficial, survey course of limited long-term value—a few carefully chosen cases and substantive issues will be studied deeply in search of insights which can then be applied more universally. The student will learn by doing, by testing ideas against those of classmates, by challenging conventional wisdom, by being actively involved in the educational process. It will require a great deal of hard work, but the intellectual growth and the sense of satisfaction will be great too.

I want to personally congratulate those who have been chosen to be in the first class in this exciting new program. Your selection is an honor. It is evidence of the confidence which the top management in your directorate has in your bright prospects as a future leader in this Agency. It is evidence of the confidence that I have in you.

NEW RECRUITMENT SYSTEM CUTS PROCESSING TIME DRAMATICALLY

Last November, Harry Fitzwater, our Director of Personnel Policy, Planning, and Management, initiated a significant new program to improve personnel recruiting for the Agency. Together with his Deputy for Recruitment and Placement, their principal assistants, and officers from the Offices of Medical Services and Security, they comprised an action team to look at the issues and determine what changes would both speed up the hiring process and improve it. A computer simulation model was used to replicate the existing system and permit quick and consistent evaluations of how proposed changes might affect the recruiting system before a decision was made to implement them.

By mid-March several promising innovations were identified. Time savers were put into use to identify ineligible applicants quickly.

Significant progress has now been achieved in putting these changes into practice in spite of complications arising from the hiring freeze and other uncertainties. The revised applicant screening by the Security/Medical team is culling out 10% to 15% of the applicants prior to beginning the expensive background investigation and full medical examination. Some applicants for clerical positions have entered on duty with full security and medical approval only two to three weeks after their inquiring about possible employment.

Ultimately, the average time to hire professionals should drop from the 325 days of last November to about 80 to 90 days. The average time to hire clericals should drop to about 40 days. In shortening this time, the administrative burdens of recruiting are reduced by about 75%, and the load on Security and Medical staffs by 40%. Most important, reduced hiring times make Agency employment more attractive to candidates in the highly competitive categories who would be unwilling to wait out the earlier system.

Particularly pleasing to me is the exemplary teamwork in this effort primarily among the Offices of Personnel Policy, Planning, and Management, Security, Medical, as well as all other Agency elements in their response and cooperation in adapting to these changes. These important achievements will ensure we have the ability to hire the best candidates faster and at less cost.

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE WEEK

The President has designated September 14-20 as National Hispanic Heritage Week. This national celebration is important for several reasons. The week provides an opportunity to recognize and focus on Hispanic culture and the ways it has enriched all our lives. Moreover, the week provides an occasion to emphasize the profound contribution that Americans of Hispanic descent have made to the development of this nation.

National Hispanic Heritage Week is also a time for us all to reaffirm our commitment to the fullest possible utilization of the talents and skills of Hispanic Americans. The CIA Hispanic Employment Program and our individual commitment to its goals are key means to this end.

Please take note of attendant publicity and join me in enjoying the activities planned for this special week of celebration. ¡Celebramos la Hispanidad!

PROGRESS REPORT ON NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR

On 3 May 1977, I inaugurated *Notes From the Director*. I felt there were not enough established systems of personalized communications between senior management and the employees of the Agency. In the ensuing years, a total of 57 Notes have been published, covering such subjects as Security, Budget, and Personnel, among others. The feedback from you indicates this form of communication has been reasonably successful in keeping you informed about issues of broad interest. I have always solicited your ideas for inclusion, and would again like to request topics you consider to be of interest to all. You may submit your ideas to the Office of Public Affairs, 1F06, Headquarters.



STANSFIELD TURNER
Director